

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to modify the eligibility of veterans for treatment as a low-income family for purposes of enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs and to guarantee health care benefits for veterans enrolled in such system, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SANDERS introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to modify the eligibility of veterans for treatment as a low-income family for purposes of enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs and to guarantee health care benefits for veterans enrolled in such system, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Veterans State Eligi-
5 bility Standardization Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF DETERMINATION OF ELIGI-**
2 **BILITY OF VETERANS FOR TREATMENT AS A**
3 **LOW-INCOME FAMILY FOR PURPOSES OF EN-**
4 **ROLLMENT IN THE PATIENT ENROLLMENT**
5 **SYSTEM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS**
6 **AFFAIRS.**

7 (a) **AREAS OF RESIDENCE.**—The Secretary of Vet-
8 erans Affairs shall modify the areas in which veterans re-
9 side as specified for purposes of determining whether vet-
10 erans qualify for treatment as low-income families for en-
11 rollment in the patient enrollment system of the Depart-
12 ment of Veterans Affairs under section 1705(a)(7) of title
13 38, United States Code, to meet the requirements as fol-
14 lows:

15 (1) Any area so specified shall be within only
16 one State.

17 (2) Any area so specified shall be coextensive
18 with one or more counties (or similar political sub-
19 divisions) in the State concerned.

20 (b) **VARIABLE INCOME THRESHOLDS.**—The Sec-
21 retary shall modify the thresholds for income as specified
22 for purposes of determining whether veterans qualify for
23 treatment as low-income families for enrollment in the pa-
24 tient enrollment system referred to in subsection (a) to
25 meet the requirements as follows:

1 (1) There shall be one income threshold for
2 each State, equal to 100 percent of the highest in-
3 come threshold among—

4 (A) the counties or metropolitan statistical
5 areas within such State; and

6 (B) any metropolitan statistical area that
7 encompasses territory of such State and one or
8 more other States.

9 (2) The calculation of the highest income
10 threshold of a county or metropolitan statistical area
11 shall be consistent with the calculation used for pur-
12 poses of section 3(b) of the United States Housing
13 Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)).

14 (3) The timing and methodology for imple-
15 menting any modifications in geographic income
16 thresholds pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be deter-
17 mined by the Secretary in such a manner as to per-
18 mit the Department to build capacity for enrolling
19 such additional veterans in the patient enrollment
20 system of the Department as become eligible for en-
21 rollment as a result of such modifications, except
22 that all required modifications shall be completed
23 not later than five years after date of the enactment
24 of this Act.

1 (c) METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA.—In this sec-
2 tion, the term “metropolitan statistical area” has the
3 meaning given that term by the Office of Management and
4 Budget.

5 **SEC. 3. GUARANTEE OF HEALTH CARE BENEFITS FOR EN-**
6 **ROLLED VETERANS.**

7 The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that
8 all veterans, once enrolled in the patient enrollment system
9 of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section
10 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, remain enrolled
11 in such system and may continue receiving health care fur-
12 nished by the Department if they choose, subject to such
13 cost-sharing requirements as may apply to the veteran
14 under existing provisions of law.